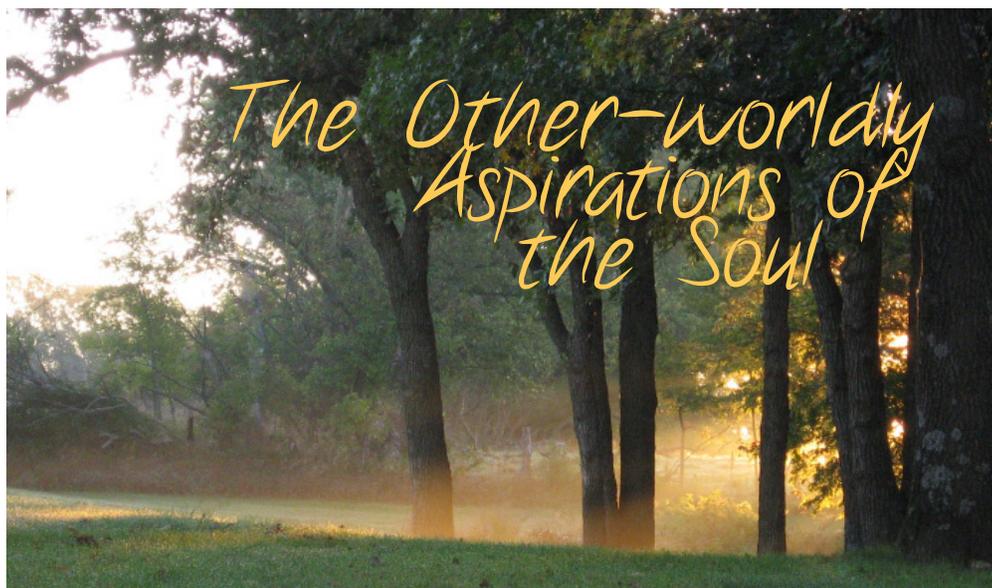


One thing I have asked from
the Lord, that I shall seek:
That I may dwell in the house
of the Lord all the days of
my life,
To behold the beauty of the
Lord
And to meditate in His temple.

Psalms 27:4



ONLY THROUGH PRACTICE do we wean the flesh from its earthly desires. We are not born with a longing for the presence of God, nor does it come involuntarily with the indwelling Spirit. The *thought* of it, perhaps, comes with the Spirit at the moment of conversion, but the true longing, the *passion* for living in His presence must be nurtured.

Flesh is born with a longing for the soil, the place of its birth.

**“By the sweat of your face
You will eat bread,
Till you return to the ground,
Because from it you were taken;
For you are dust,
And to dust you shall return.”**

Genesis 3:19

Even believers must be coaxed away, trained away from that dark, warm dwelling. Our feet rest comfortably on this earth, its oxygen is natural to our lungs, its rhythms are native to us. But the Spirit comes in and ignites in us the thought, the glimmer of possibility, that there is something better—that there is something *healthier* than our original dwelling.

As we, over time, learn of God through the sanction of the Son and the translating Spirit; as we listen to His voice and experience His gracious answers to ours; as His ways gradually become more comfortable, more “natural” to us, the thought of dwelling with God is replaced by a true longing

for it. And our passion for Him is at last joined to His passion for us.

**O Lord, I love the habitation of Your house
And the place where Your glory dwells.**

Psalms 26:8



To “dwell in the house of the Lord” is to be part of His family unit. Anyone can stop by for a visit and a brief chat. Anyone can poke their head inside the front door to admire the pretty wall hangings. But only *family* stays; only a member of the family puts down roots and remains “all the days of my life.”

In the strange, breathtaking economy of life with God in Christ, those days extend from the here and now of earth, all the way through eternity itself. Right now we are accorded the privilege, the gift, of seeking the Lord and sampling His beauty in His “temple”—that is, in us, for in Christ *we* are His temple. No cold stone building, right now His temple is made of flesh and blood.

**Or do you not know that your body is a temple
of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have
from God, and that you are not your own?**

1 Corinthians 6:19

To spend time in communion with God, to worship and adore Him, we need not enter a building, for we *are* the building.

This too is an earthly sampling of eternity. In heaven we will worship not before an empty cross, not before the ancient mercy seat, but before *Him*—in person. We will worship the Father and the Lamb themselves, with no earthly artifice standing in their stead.

More than that, there will come a day beyond even that when, in the new Jerusalem on a new earth, there will still be no need for a temple.

**And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying,
“Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men,
and He will dwell among them, and they shall
be His people, and God Himself will be among
them...” I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God
the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.**

Revelation 21:3, 22

For every believer on earth today the beginnings of that other-worldly communion and bliss with the Lord are available right now. The deep longing to live with Him even now comes when we apprehend the truth that the very Creator and Lord of the universe desires *our* company. In the end, in the beginning of the final eternity, He will move His house, His dwelling place closer to *our* beginning, on a new earth. And there “He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.”

